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Letter dated 8 April 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to bring to your attention the statement on Guinea-Bissau issued on 8 April 2005 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Jean-Marc **Hoscheit**
Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 8 April 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement on Guinea-Bissau issued on 8 April 2005 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union

The European Union fully supports the presidential statement of the United Nations Security Council issued on 31 March recognizing the progress achieved in Guinea-Bissau in the last months, especially in the areas of the electoral process and in economic and budgetary management.

The European Union reiterates its commitment to assist in a peaceful and free electoral process leading to presidential elections on 19 June 2005. The European Union also supports the ongoing efforts of Guinea-Bissau towards peace, political stability and sustainable development of which security sector reform is an important element. In this context the European Union stresses the importance of the donor round-table conference scheduled for October 2005.

The European Union also expresses its growing concern at recent political developments in the country, particularly the decision by Mr. Kumba Yala, with the support of the PRS party, to run for the next presidential elections, to be held on 19 June. This decision, which goes against the Transitional Charter, which was signed in the presence of international observers like the European Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations, as well as his recent public declarations of radicalism and appeals for social and political unrest, can seriously undermine the efforts and progress achieved by the authorities of Guinea-Bissau during the current political and military transitional process.

The European Union encourages all Guinea-Bissau stakeholders to renew their commitment to reconciliation in order to prevent the derailing of the transitional process and to allow the country to break the cycle of political conflict.

The European Union continues to support the primordial role of the United Nations and calls upon relevant regional organizations, such as the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and ECOWAS, to remain actively engaged in helping Guinea-Bissau to achieve political stability.

The European Union recalls the conclusions of the article 96 consultation, highlighting in particular the commitment regarding the return to an independent judiciary and civil control of the armed forces, as well as the commitment to the holding of democratic elections.

In this context, the European Union expresses its serious concerns regarding the perceived risks of a growing culture of impunity linked to the politically motivated violence that occurred in past crises, underlining that this development is seen as a root cause of ongoing instability in the country.

The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries Croatia* and Turkey, the countries of the stabilization and association process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

* Croatia continues to be part of the stabilization and association process.